

Lynne Smith

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Sent: Saturday, February 09, 2013 5:27 PM
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Cc: Sen. Lesil McGuire; pgberkahn@gmail.com
Subject: SB 32

I am a 37 year resident of the great state of Alaska currently residing on the Kenai Peninsula who likes to recreate and fish in Wood-Tikchik State Park. I am strongly opposed to SB 32 which would allow hydroelectric studies in Wood-Tikchik State Park. Your predecessors in the legislature had the foresight to set apart 1.6 million acres to form this country's largest state park – Wood-Tikchik State Park. The current management plan does not allow for hydroelectric in certain sections of the Park which includes Chikuminuk Lake. It should stay that way. It is not just the hydroelectric infrastructures that bothers me, it is everything else that goes with it – power lines, roads, helicopters, etc. These concerns also come into play for the proposed Elva and Grant Lakes project. I understand the situation you are in to find cheaper sources of energy for the villages, i.e. Bethel, but there are other alternatives that should be looked at first. Wind is a good one. Also there are other watersheds that could be studied that are not part of a State Park or Refuge in the area.

Even though I live on the Kenai Peninsula with rivers that support great fish runs, I rarely fish here anymore. I much prefer the pristine wilderness of Wood-Tikchik State Park. I catch my years supply of salmon within the Park every year and bring them home with me. The crowds on the Kenai are not fun anymore; this is why Wood-Tikchik SP should stay protected from hydro development as was originally intended. It is drop dead gorgeous, quiet, and full of nature's wonders. (Not to mention the headwaters of Bristol Bay is the home to the largest salmon runs in the world and supports a subsistence lifestyle for thousands!) It is one of Alaska's gems and its greatest asset is the pristine wilderness. Let's protect the legacy left by Governor Jay Hammond and all the Bristol Bay residents who worked so hard to set this area aside as a Park and use our grant money and time to find cheaper sources of energy outside of the Park.

P.S. Hydroelectric energy is not green and kills fish in more ways than one. I have recently visited a site in AZ (Fossil Creek) where a hydro dam was decommissioned, torn down and hauled away. It is a beautiful area now and is a hiking destination for many. Other dams like the one on the Elwa River in Washington are going through the same process. Let's not continue making the same mistakes that were done in the Lower 48 that cost huge amounts of money to fix. We are smarter than that.

P.S.S. Do you know why Bristol Bay has the largest salmon runs in the world? It's because all the other large runs have been destroyed.

Thank you for your time,

Patti Berkhahn

Alaskan resident who lives to fish and play in the backcountry

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